

FACT SHEET

Open Grant Program

BACKGROUND

This category is being offered to allow librarians to satisfy needs that are not now being met by current programs. It has always been a priority of the federal program to encourage innovation and risk taking. It is also an interest of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to provide librarians with opportunities to help fulfill their long range plan goals and objectives. The **Open** program will allow applicants to apply new methods to solve problems, build programs, and best carry out their library's mission and plan. These projects must meet the needs of a specific target audience. It is important that applicants speak with a consultant about their project ideas for feedback and guidance prior to submitting an application.

The **Open** LSTA grant program allows applicants as much flexibility in the development of their projects as possible. Applicants can seek awards for projects that otherwise do not fall under the current LSTA program offerings, whether the project is innovative or well applied in many libraries.

The **Open** Grant will also allow the applicant to adapt programs that have been offered in the past or have proven models, such as Discovery Kits, Connecting Cultures, Community Languages and Serving People with Disabilities. (Information about these "Grants from the Past" programs may be found in the LSTA section at

http://mblc.state.ma.us/grants/lsta/opportunities/related_resources/index.php.) Finally, the **Open** Program offers libraries an opportunity to exercise maximum creativity to implement unique services in a flexible and collaborative grant-making environment. It encourages creative program development and rewards those librarians willing to engage in a higher level of effort and to take those risks.

MASSACHUSETTS LONG-RANGE PLAN

The project must address an objective of the Massachusetts Long Range Plan 2008-2012.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Any library or cooperating group that meets standard eligibility requirements for Direct Grant programs is eligible to apply. A cooperating group may apply on behalf of one or more of its members, however, as well as the entire group.

BUDGET/FUNDING

Projects may be funded for 1 or 2 years. It is anticipated that funding requests will be in a range of \$5,000 to \$30,000 (funding for cooperatives may exceed this maximum under certain circumstances). Applicants are reminded that a significant program component is required for any project to assure that the target population will be directly served, and that *measurable, outcome-based goals and objectives are important to a project's approval*. Requests that are largely for materials, equipment, or staff will not be considered. As a general guide, none of these budget elements should exceed 30% of the total amount requested. A significant local in-kind or cash contribution is expected. Requests for library automation systems or for retrospective conversion cannot be accepted under this program.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a **Letter of Intent** form with the “Open” option checked off under **TYPE**.

Applicants should include a project abstract (150-200 words), including goals and *activities of the project* with the letter of intent to help us put you in touch with the appropriate consultant.

WHERE TO BEGIN?

Contact us at 1-800-952-7403:

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